

# Revision Lists for Germans from Russia Research

Russia “How to” Guide, Intermediate Level: Instruction

November 2019

## OBJECTIVE

This guide will teach you how to locate and read an original Russian revision list for your Black Sea or Volga Germans from Russia ancestor.

## INTRODUCTION

Aside from church records, revision lists (*Ревизские Сказки*) are some of the most important records for Germans from Russia genealogical research. Like U.S. census records, these records list each member of the family, providing names, ages, and relationships. For this reason, they are essential for establishing family relationships, ages, and tracking a family over time. Although many researchers refer to these records as “Russian censuses,” they are technically not a census – revision lists are taxation records.

In 1718, Tsar Peter the Great instituted a head tax known as the “soul” tax. As a result, beginning in 1719, revision lists, or enumerations of the taxable population, were created to identify taxpayers. There were ten revisions taken sporadically until the final revision in 1858. Because the Russian Empire taxed individuals, all members of the household were listed. Therefore, revision lists are an important source for approximating vital events and identifying family members<sup>1</sup>

Many revision lists records have been indexed, translated into English, and published into “census” books by societies such as the American Historical Society of Germans from Russia or the Germans for Russia Heritage Society; however, there are records for many colonies that have not yet been indexed. And even if revision list records for your ancestor’s colony have already been indexed, it is important to look at the original record. This guide will teach you how to locate and read a Russian revision list for your Germans from Russia ancestor.

You may want to consult the following “How to” Guides before continuing:

- [Germans from Russia: Locating the Town with Websites and Gazetteers](#)
- [Reading Russian Documents: The Alphabet](#)
- [Reading Russian Documents: Deciphering the Handwriting and Understanding the Grammar](#)

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<sup>1</sup> Joseph B. Everett, “‘Soul’ Searching in the Russian Censuses of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Century,” *FEEFHS*, vol. 5, no. 3-4 (August 1998): 34-42.

# HOW TO

## Locating a Revision List

- Revision lists were recorded at the uyezd, or the county level. In order to locate revision lists for your ancestor, you will need to know the colony, uyezd (county) and gubernia (province) and region (i.e. Black Sea or Volga) that they lived in. To determine this information, please see [Germans from Russia: Locating the Town with Websites and Gazetteers](#)

A very small portion of revision lists have been microfilmed and/or digitized. The Family History Library has a select collection of revision list records for the Black Sea and Volga regions. Note that some of these records are duplicate copies or are not complete for entire colonies. If you are not able to find revision list records for your ancestor's colony, they may still be preserved in a Russian archive.

To locate revision list records for Germans from Russia, visit the Black Sea Germans or Volga Germans pages on the FamilySearch Wiki. Scroll down to find the heading **Revision Lists**. Next, find the table for the gubernia and uyezd that your ancestor lived in and search for the name of the colony in the **Colony Name** column. You can also search with the Ctrl-F feature. On a webpage, pressing the keys *Ctrl* and *F* (or *Command* and *F* for Mac users) at the same time will bring up a search box. Type what you are looking for in the search box and it will locate the text on the page.

Colony names and alternate names are provided in both German/English and Russian. Use the **Year** column to find records for the time frame you are searching for. To access the records for your time and place, simply click on the colony name(s). These tables are still in progress, and more colonies are being added regularly, so be sure to check back often to see if information regarding your colony has been added.

To find revision list records that have not yet been included in the tables mentioned above, use the FamilySearch Catalog. Visit <http://www.familysearch.org/search/catalog>. In the **Place** box, type in the name of the gubernia. Next, select **Places within [name of gubernia]**. This will open a drop-down box with the names of the uyezdi within that gubernia. Select the uyezd you are searching for, and a list of records FamilySearch has for that uyezd will appear. For example, try type in *Bessarabia, Russia*, and then choose *Places within Russia, Bessarabia*. Next, select *Akkerman*.

Revision lists are catalogued under **Taxation** or **Census** in the catalog. Akkerman uyezd has one census and one taxation record available. Click on **Taxation** or **Census** to reveal the records contained under that subheading. The title of individual records may appear in English as *Revision Lists* or in Russian as *Ревизские Сказки*. Select the collection you would like to look at, and the catalog entry page will appear. Scroll down until you find **Film/Digital Notes**. In the column labeled **Note**, you will find a description of what is contained on that microfilm. Descriptions will typically be in Russian – if you do not speak Russian, copy and paste the entry into an online translator such as Google Translate to translate the description. Or, if you are using a browser such as Google Chrome, right click anywhere on the page and select **Translate to English**. Descriptions may include information such as the name of the city or uyezd, year and the fond (фонд or ф.), opis (опись or о.) and delo (дело or д.) number. The

fond, opis, and delo number are organizational terms for archives, comparable to a call number. The other headings give information as to the location, film number, DGS number and availability. If there is a camera icon next to the film and DGS numbers, this means that digital images are available to view online. If there is a key above the camera, this means that certain restrictions apply. If this is the case, images may be viewable in a FamilySearch Center, although additional restrictions may still apply. If there is a microfilm icon, the microfilm can be viewed at the Family History Library in Salt Lake City, Utah.

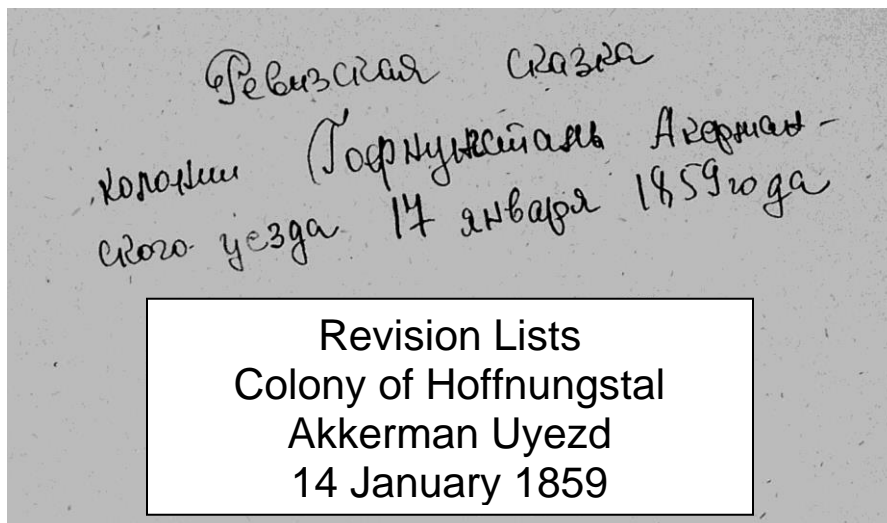
## Grammar

Genitive case, or a grammatical case ending added to words to express belonging, appears often in revision lists. In these records, it is most commonly seen as an ending to the head of household's name (or another male's name) to express belonging and relationships. For example, the German name Johann would be written as логанъ in a historical record, but to say that Johann's wife's name was Barbara, you would see логана жена Барбара.

German	Nominative	Genitive
Adam	Адамъ (ø)	Адам <sup>a</sup>
Johann	логанъ (ø)	логан <sup>a</sup>
Wilhelm	Вильгелмъ (ø)	Вильгелм <sup>a</sup>
Georg	Георгъ (ø)	Георг <sup>a</sup>

The <sup>a</sup> is a genitive case ending expressing belonging. In order to change a male name to genitive case, remove the <sup>ъ</sup> (in some cases there may not be a <sup>ъ</sup>), and add an <sup>a</sup> to the end. See the chart above for more examples. For a more in depth discussion of genitive case, please read [Reading Russian Documents: Deciphering the Handwriting and Understanding the Grammar](#).

## Reading a Revision List



As mentioned above, revision lists are organized by uyezd. Within the uyezd grouping, revision list records are then organized by the town, or colony. Often (though not always) a new town begins with a cover page, such as the one to the right that includes the date and location.

After the cover page, you may find a surname index, otherwise, entries for families and individuals within that colony will begin. Some revision lists were recorded on a pre-printed form while others were kept in a handwritten format. Regardless of whether it was pre-printed or written by hand, both forms generally follow the same column structure. Revision lists consist of both a left and right-hand page, as illustrated in the image on the following page. Males were recorded on the left while females were recorded on the right. Individual households are divided by a line, as marked by the arrows below.

**РЕВИЗСКАЯ СКАЗКА**  
1859 года Января 17<sup>го</sup> дня Государственной ревизии,  
Октябрьского года, Никитинского округа,  
Колонии Губернственной.

Семья.		Мужеский полъ.	По последней ревизии состо- ало и послѣ оной перебыло.		Въ кото- ромъ числѣ было.	Възрѣ на лицо.
№ у ревиз- ии.	№ у ревиз- ии.		Дата.	Дата.		
28.	26.	Рябенкофъ Рейсгофъ безъ снѣдковъ:	17.	1859.		
		Полковникъ	18.	"	26.	
		Его снѣдъ Рейсгофъ	1859.	"	2.	
		Рябенкофъ	8.	"	10.	
		Рябенкофъ	8.	"	12.	
		Рябенкофъ	2.	"	10.	
		Рябенкофъ	2.	"	10.	
29.	27.	Рябенкофъ Рейсгофъ безъ снѣдковъ	14.	"	24.	
		Его снѣдъ Рейсгофъ	1859.	"	1.	
30.	28.	Анофъ Рейсгофъ	14.	"	20.	

**РЕВИЗСКАЯ СКАЗКА**  
1859 года Января 17<sup>го</sup> дня Государственной ревизии,  
Октябрьского года, Никитинского округа,  
Колонии Губернственной.

Семья.		Женский полъ.	По последней ревизии состо- ало и послѣ оной перебыло.		Въ кото- ромъ числѣ было.	Възрѣ на лицо.
№ у ревиз- ии.	№ у ревиз- ии.		Дата.	Дата.		
28.	26.	Рябенкофъ Рейсгофъ жена Иза				24.
		Его снѣдъ Рейсгофъ				2.
29.	27.	Рябенкофъ Рейсгофъ жена Рейсгофъ				24.
30.	28.	Анофъ Рейсгофъ жена Рейсгофъ				18.

The information within the columns (or in some cases the columns themselves) were written in Russian cursive. For help reading this script, you may find the following resources useful:

- [Russian Handwriting, FamilySearch Wiki](#)
- [Reading Russian Documents: The Alphabet, Russia "How to" Guides](#)
- [Reading Russian Documents: Deciphering the Handwriting and Understanding the Grammar, Russia "How to" Guides](#)
- [Reading Russian Handwritten Records, FamilySearch Learning Center](#)
- [Russian Alphabet, Language and Handwriting, FamilySearch Learning Center](#)

Keep in mind that you do not need to be a fluent Russian speaker to read a revision list – if you can learn to recognize the letters and understand the column headings, you can read a revision list record!



## Left-Hand Side (Males)

The left-hand side of the page is where males were recorded. The head of household is listed as well as the male members of the household with their ages at the current and previous revisions. Use the image and translation of the columns below to familiarize yourself with the information recorded for males.

РЕВИЗСКАЯ СКАЗКА					
1859 года Января 17го дня Самарской губернии, Октябрьского Уезда, Покотинского округа, Покотинской Губернскаго.					
2 Семья.	3 Мужеский полъ.	4 По последней ревизии состо- ло и посл- оной прибыло.	5 Изъ того числа вы- было	6 Былъ на лицо.	
№ 9 ревиз- ии.	№ 10 ревиз- ии.	Дата.	Когда имен- но.	Дата	
28.	30.	Викторъ Вейсгаръ его сновъ:		57.	умеръ 1856.
		Госетъ		18.	"
		его сновъ Иванъ		новоб. 1856	"
		Фридрихъ		8.	"
		Иванъ		5.	"
		Готфридъ		2.	"
		Готфридъ		2.	"

Revision List					
1 18.... year .... day [name of gubernia, uyezd and colony]					
2 no.	3 Male	4 How old according to the previous revision and whether they arrived since then	5 Which of these are now gone [moved or died]	6 Current	
2a in previous revision	2b in current revision	4a Ages	5a When exactly [moved or died]	6a Ages	

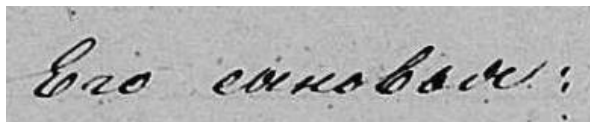
1. Information regarding the date and location of the revision is found here. The date follows a year, month and day format, while the location generally starts from the largest jurisdiction down to the smallest – gubernia/oblast, uyezd/okrug, and colony. These jurisdictions will often be in genitive case. Before transferring the names of the locations into your family tree, be sure to convert the grammatical case endings back to nominative case. For help regarding this, please see [Reading Russian Documents: Deciphering the Handwriting and Understanding the Grammar](#).

The entry reads as follows:

**In Russian:** 1859 года Января 17<sup>го</sup> дня Бессарабской области,  
Аккерманнского Уѣзда, Клястицкаго округа, Колоніи Гофнунгсталя


**In English:** 17 January 1859, Bessarabia Oblast, Akkerman Uyezd, Klyastitski  
Okrug, Colony of Hoffnungstal

2. The second column is the house or family number in the previous revision (2a) and in the current revision (2b). This number reflects the order in which they were enumerated and is not necessarily an address. For this example, in the previous revision, the household was number twenty-eight, and in the 1859 (current) revision, it was number thirty-six.
3. The names of the male members of the household are found in the third column. The head of household was typically listed first. He will be followed by other members of the household, often sons or other relatives. The following are examples of relationship vocabulary you may find in this column:



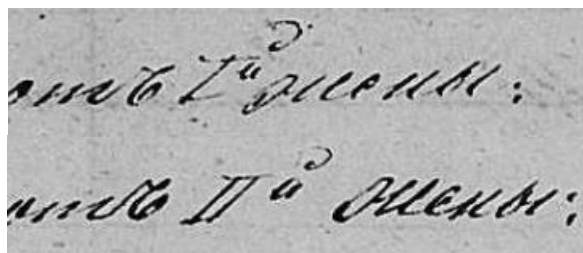
**Его сыновья = His sons**

This will be followed by the names of the head of household's sons. In some cases, the sons may be numbered.



**Его сын = His son**

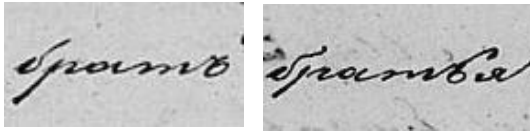
This will be followed by the name of the head of household's son.



**отъ I<sup>й</sup> (первой) жены =  
from first wife**

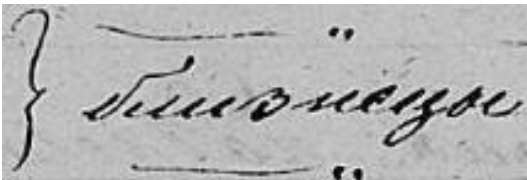
**отъ II<sup>й</sup> (второй) жены =  
from second wife**

If a man had more than one wife, revision lists will often specify which wife the child came from.



**братъ = brother    братья = brothers**

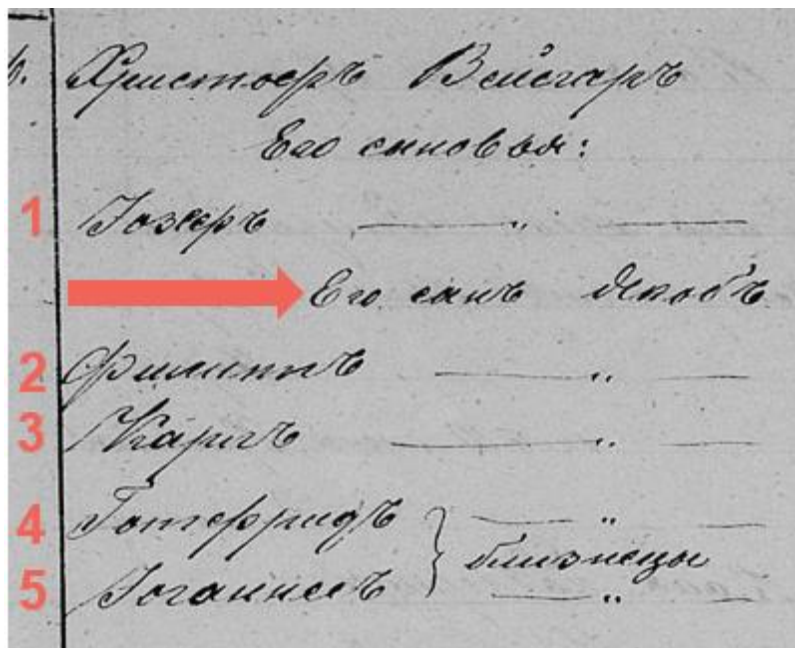
This will often be preceded by the name of the head of household in genitive case – the genitive case ending shows whom the brother belonged to.



**близницы = twins**

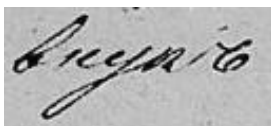
Twins will be grouped together with a bracket and the Russian word for twins. Their ages will be the same.

If grandchildren lived with the head of household, the revision list will not typically read “his grandchildren.” Instead, grandchildren will be listed as sons of his sons, and slightly indented, as shown in the example below.



In this example, the head of household, Christoph Veigar (Христофъ Вейгаръ) had five sons: Joseph (Юзефъ), Phillip (Филиппъ), Karl (Карлъ), Gottfried (Готфридъ) and Johannes (Иоганнесъ). Gottfried and Johannes were twins.

His oldest son, Joseph, had his own child – Jacob (Якобъ), who is indented and listed below his father. Following his name, the rest of the sons of the head of household are listed.



**внук = grandchild    внуки = grandchildren**

If the father of the head of household's grandchild was dead or did not live in the household, the word внук (singular) or внуки (plural) will be used for grandchild.

If you find other vocabulary not mentioned in this guide throughout your revision list research, try using the [Russian Genealogical Word List](#) or an online translator/dictionary to find a translation.

4. This column lists the age in the previous revision. If an individual was not recorded in the previous revision, the document will state why. The following are examples of these reasons:

**ново р. (новорождения) = new birth**

If a child was born in between revisions, the year they were born will listed following this word. Other abbreviations might include: **род.** or **нов.**

**прибыль въ ... = arrived in...**

If a colonist arrived in the colony between revisions, the year they arrived will often be recorded. In some cases, following the word *из* or *от*, the name of the place they lived in before will be listed. You may also find the phrase “перечислен в” (listed in) followed by the name of the colony they were previously recorded in.

5. This column lists those who are now “gone,” i.e., those who have moved or died. The record will often list when the individual died or where they moved to. The location that they moved to will occasionally be listed. In the example record, no members of the household moved or died in between revisions. The following is a list of vocabulary you might find in this column.

**умеръ = померъ = died**

If an individual died between revisions, the death year will be listed below the word “died”

**убить = killed**

Similar to the word *умеръ*, *убитъ* indicates a death – though one that is untimely. This could be related to an accident, murder, or otherwise untimely death. The year of death will be recorded.

**перечислен в = listed in**

If they have moved in between revisions, you may see the words “перечислен в” (listed in) followed by the name of the colony they moved to.

6. The final column records the age at the current revision, or the age in the year mentioned at the top of the document. This can be used to calculate an approximate birth year.



## Right-Hand Side (Females)

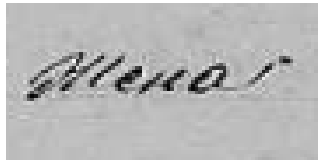
Females were recorded on the right-hand side of the document. A woman's age at the current revision was listed, however, the age at the previous revision was not recorded. Use the image and translation of the columns below to familiarize yourself with the information recorded for females.

РЕВИЗСКАЯ СКАЗКА				
1869 года Января 17-го дня Самарской губернии Оренбургского Уезда, Кинешемского окр. уезда, Починки Березинского.				
2 Семья.		3 Женский полъ.	4 Во времен- ной отлуч- кѣ.	5 Нытъ на лицо.
2a № в ревиз- ии.	2b № 10 ревиз- ии.		4a Съ котораго времени.	5a Лѣтъ.
28.	30.	Павлова Виссера жена Пав- лова оне сестра Матарино	"	22.
			"	4.

Revision List				
1 18.... year .... day [name of gubernia, uyezd and colony]				
2 no.		3 Female	4 Whether absent in the meantime [since the previous revision]	5 Current
2a in previous revision	2b in current revision		4a Since when [have they been absent or dead]	5a Ages

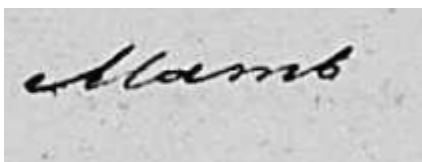
The information recorded in columns one through three on the right-hand side of the document contains the same information as in the male portion of the document, the only exception being different vocabulary and wordings for the relationships found in column number three. On the following page, you will find examples of relationship vocabulary.

It is important to note that genitive case, or a grammatical case ending added to words to express belonging, appears often in this column. For more information regarding genitive case, please see [Reading Russian Documents: Deciphering the Handwriting and Understanding the Grammar](#). Keep in mind that relationships do not always correspond to the head of household, so be sure to pay attention to grammatical case endings, indentations, and the order of entries.



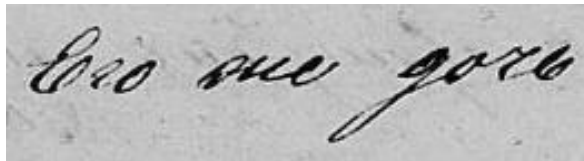
**жена = wife**

This phrase will usually be preceded by the name of the husband in genitive case and followed by the name of the wife in nominative case.



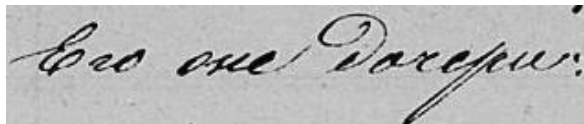
**мать = mother**

This phrase will usually be preceded by the name of the son in genitive case and followed by the name of the mother in nominative case.



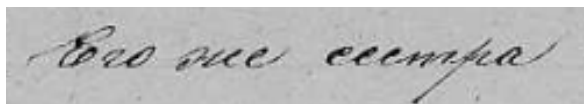
**Его же дочь = His daughter**

This will be followed by the name of the daughter. The word *же* may or may not be included. In some instances, the name of the father in genitive case may appear, followed by the word *дочь*, and the name of the daughter in nominative case.



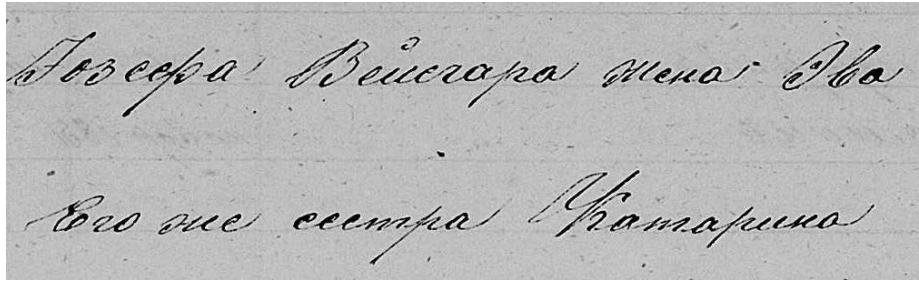
**Его же дочери = His daughters**

This will be followed by the names of the daughters. The word *же* may or may not be included. In some instances, the name of the father in genitive case may appear, followed by the word *дочери*, and the names of the daughters in nominative case.



**Его же сестра = His sister**

This will be followed by the names the sister (if there are multiple sisters living in the household, the word *сестры* will be used). The word *же* may or may not be included. In some instances, the name of the brother in genitive case may appear, followed by the word *сестра/сестры*, and the name(s) of the sister(s) in nominative case.



In this example, there are two females living in the household. The first is Joseph's wife Eva. (Иозефа Вейгара жена Эва, grammatical case endings indicate this means Eva, the wife of Joseph Veigar). The second female in the household is his (Joseph's) sister, Katharina (Катарина).

The remaining columns (4-5) on the female side of the document correspond to columns 5-6 on the male side. Refer to the instructions above for a description of information found in these columns.

#### **Examples used in this guide were taken from the following sources:**

"Ревизские Сказки," *FamilySearch* (<http://FamilySearch.org>); Hoffnungstal, Akkerman, Bessarabia, Ревизские Сказки 1859, ф. 134, о. 2, д. 459, FHL microfilm 2375391, item 10.

"Ревизские сказки: Николаевск (уезд); Волжские немцы, 1850-1857," *FamilySearch* (<http://FamilySearch.org>); Baskakovka, Nikolaevsk, Saratov, 1857, ф. 150, о. 1, д. 151, FHL microfilm 2372695, images 778-839.

## **ACTIVITY**

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